

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION TO FORD ACCESSION

REF: USIA 17119 CIRCULAR

MEDIA REACTION TO FORD ACCESSION:

1. SWEARING-IN CEREMONY WAS COVERED LIVE BY AUSTRIAN TV, SHOWN AGAIN IN THE TWO EVENING NEWSCASES, AND REPEATED IN ENGLISH (THIS TIME WITHOUT A GERMAN TRANSLATION) AT A LATE HOUR. EQUALLY HEAVEY RADIO COVERAGE. ELECTRONIC MEDIA STRESSED CONTINUITY, IN PARTICULAR DR. KISSINGER'S REMAINING IN OFFICE, AND THE NEW PRESIDENT'S MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN ENVOYS.

2. TOP COVERAGE IN ALL SIX VIENNA PAPERS AUG. 10. NAY PICTURES. INDEPENDENT MASS-CIRCULATION KURIER LED OFF WITH QUOTING MR. FORD'S WISH THAT HIS FELLOW AMERICANS CONFIRM HIM AS THEIR PRESIDENT WITH THEIR PRAYERS. SAME PAPER USED "NEW YORK TIMES" MATERIAL, HEADLINING IT "NEW PREDIDENT RELIES ON KISSINGER."

3. THE OTHER MASS CIRCULATION DAILY, INDEPENDENT KRONEN-ZIETING, POINTED TO THE NEW PRESIDENT'S SUPPORT FROM LEADERS OF BOTH PARTIES. THE PAPER HEADLINED ROBERT STRAUSS' PLEA FOR AN ERA OF RECONCILIATION. ALSOT HIS PAPER USED U.S. PRESS MATERIAL - A "WASHINTON POST" STORY ON FORD'S DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN PROBLEMS.

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4. PRESITGIOUS INDEPENDENT DIE PRESSE RAN HEADLINES, "GERALD

FORD FOR RECONCILIATION - NEW U.S. PRESIDENT SAYS NATIONAL NIGHTMARE IS OVER." THE PAPER'S WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT, MARLENE MANTHEY, WROTE: " THE NATO COUNTRIES, BUT ALSO THE SOVIETS, SEE IN THIS MAN (KISSINGER) THE GUARANTEE THAT THE OLD POLICY WILL BE CARRIED ON. THIS WILL BE THE EASIER SINCE FORD IS INEXPERIENCED IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

5. SEMI-OFFICIAL WIENER ZEITUNG TOP-PLAYED A ROUND-UP OF WORE SERVICE REPORTS AND EMPHASIZED THE "UNCHANGED FOREIGN POLICY." SOCIALIST ARBEITER-ZEITUNG WAS ONE OF SEVERAL PAPERS QUOTING FROM NEW PRESIDENT'S SPEECH. COMMUNIST VOLKSSTIMME FRONT-PAGED THE HEADLINE, "FORD BELIEVES NIGHTMARE IS OVER."

6. KURIER, DIE PRESSE AND KRONEN-ZEITUNG EDITORIALIZED, BUT THESE COMMENTAIRES WERE MOSTLY JUDGEMENTS ON NIXON AND WATERGATE. HUGO PORTISCH, AUSTRIA'S LEADING POLITICAL COMMENTATOR, WROTE IN KURIER: " ALL WE CAN DO IS HOPE THAT NIXON'S RESIGNATION... HAS PUT AN END TO THE AMERICAN NATION'S DIVISION, LETTING THE COUNTRY AT LAST RECOVER, AND THAT GERALD FORD WILL BE ABLE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN WHAT WAS WRONG IN NIXON'S CONDUCT OF OFFICE AND RIGHT ABOUT HIS POLICY. MAY HE SUCCEED IN RE-ESTABLISHING CONFIDENCE IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE UNITED STATE. GERALD FORD MUST SERVE A PRESIDENCY, NOT JUST AN INTERREGNUM; OTHERWISE THE WORLD WOULD GET OUT OF JOINT." GARNETT

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